

Message Text

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12

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FM AMEMBASSY SANAA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3088

INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA

CINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANAA 2392

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: YE, YS, PINS

SUBJ: YAR EXECUTES UTHMAN ASSASSINS

REF: SANAA 1891

1. SUMMARY. EIGHT ASSASSINS OF UTHMAN EXECUTED, NINE IMPRISONED AND SEVEN RELEASED. SEVENTY-SIX OTHER TERRORISTS FREED. YAR CONTINUES POLICY OF HARSH TREATMENT TERRORIST RINGLEADERS AND CLEMENCY FOR OTHERS. YARG DOWNPLAYING PDRY ROLE IN EXECUTION, PRESUMABLY IN ORDER FOSTER DETENTE. END SUMMARY.

2. YARG COURT DECEMBER 13 ANNOUNCED VERDICT IN CASE 25 ACCUSED IN ASSASSINATION REPUBLICAN COUNCIL MEMBER MUHAMMAD ALI UTHMAN. EIGHT PERSONS CONDEMNED TO DEATH AND HAVE BEEN EXECUTED; THEY INCLUDE ORGANIZER OF PLOT, THREE ACTUAL ASSASSINS, UTHMAN'S PERSONAL GUARD, AND COUSIN OF UTHMAN WHO PROVIDED MURDER WEAPONS. FIVE PERSONS SENTENCED TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT, INCLUDING COUSIN MINED MUJAHID, AND FOUR GIVEN LESSER SENTENCES (1-8 YEARS). SEVEN FREED AND SENTENCE OF ONE POSTPONED.

3. COURT ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT SIXTY NINE TERRORITSTS, TRIED IN SAME (SIXTH) BATCH OF ARRESTEES, HAVE BEEN FREED FOR LACK OF

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EVIDENCE.

4. THESE VERDICTS CONTINUE TENDENCY, OBSERVED IN EARLIER FIVE BATCHES, OF DRACONIAN TREATMENT OF HARD-CORE TERRORISTS (EXECUTIONS AND LIFE IMPRISONMENTS) WITH CLEMENCY FOR LESSER OFFENDERS WHO USUALLY LOCAL RESIDENTS BRIBED TO JOIN TERRORIST OPERATIONS FOR SMALL SUMS OF MONEY. POLICY DESIGNED TO MINIMIZE LOCAL RESENTMENTS, WHILE DISCOURAGING PDY RECRUITMENT OF NORTH YEMENIS FOR TERRORIST TRAINING.

5. IN PUBLICITY GIVEN TO SENTENCES, LOCAL MEDIA ARE NOW EMPHASIZING LOCAL NATURE OF ASSASSINATIONS AS CONTRASTED TO EARLIER EMPHASIS ON "FOREIGN" (READ PDY) ROLE. PRESIDENTIAL FONAFF ADVISOR MUHAMMAD NU'MAN ALSO TOLD AMBASSADOR DECEMBER 15 THAT ASSASSINATION DUE MAINLY PERSONAL GRUDGES. WHILE PARTICIPATION UTHMAN'S COUSIN AND PERSONAL GUARD GIVE THIS SOME CREDENCE, WE SERIOUSLY DOUBT PLOT INVOLVING TWENTY-FIVE PARTICIPANTS COULD HAVE BEEN WORK OF DISGRUNTLED INDIVIDUALS, RATHER THAN EFFORT OF PDY ORGANIZATION AND FINANCING. WE ESTIMATE NEW EXPLANATION IS MORE REFLECTION YARG INTEREST IN IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH PDY THAN RESULT ANY NEW EVIDENCE.
CRAWFORD

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